

Water Meter News

WINTER 2011-12

A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER ON THE CITY OF LODI'S WATER METER PROGRAM

ISSUE 5



Contractors install a new meter (right), while another ensures a clean job (left)



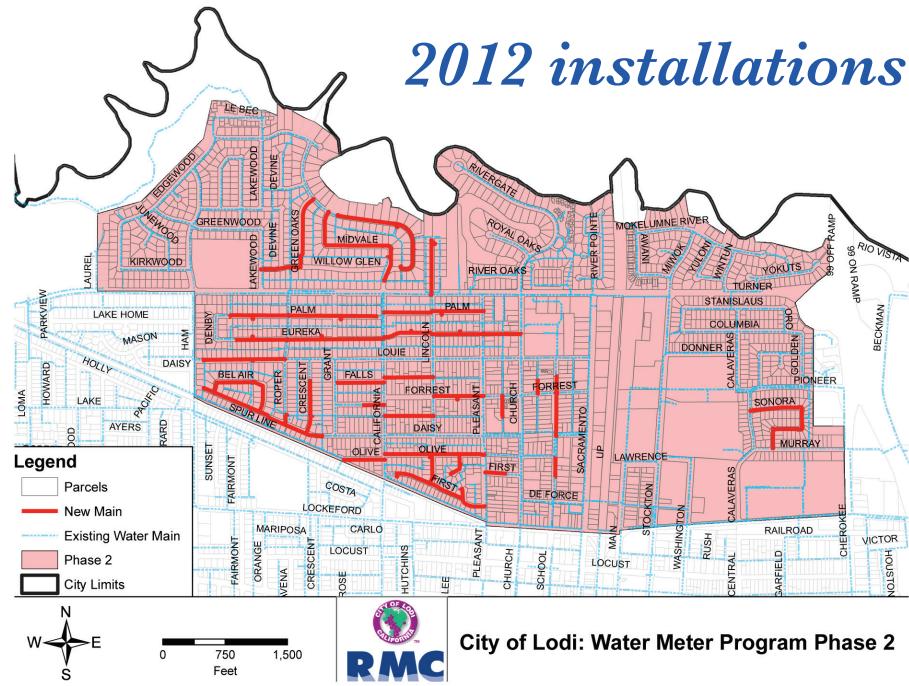
First of 7 installation phases completed

The City of Lodi's Water Meter Program Phase 1 construction was completed in November.

The City's contractor, Knife River Construction, installed 3,688 meters and 4,240 feet of new water main.

Now the City's task is creating a database that links each installed meter to the corresponding parcel and customer account. Residents within Phase 1 will have their meters read beginning this winter and will receive a comparative bill later in 2012. This will provide customers with a "what if" scenario with several months of water use history before metered billing begins in January 2013. The comparative bills will give residents a better understanding of their water use, as well as possibly alerting them to leaks, before metered billing takes effect.

The City will be retrofitting homes with meters through 2017 to comply with a State law requiring all water agencies to bill according to use.



Phase 2 construction

Construction on Water Meter Program Phase 2 is expected to begin in

April 2012 and conclude in late September 2012. The project will consist of installing some 2,000 water meters.

(See "Phase 2" on reverse)

Want more information?

Visit www.lodi.gov/meters for FAQ's and documents related to the City of Lodi's Water Meter Program.



Questions? Call the City of Lodi's Public Works Department

(209) 333-6740; email pwdept@lodi.gov

Winter water use will affect future sewer bills

Lodi residents who are receiving metered water bills have extra incentive to be mindful of their water use this winter.

Residents with water meters installed before 2011 will have their wastewater bill adjusted in July 2012 to reflect their domestic water use. This is calculated by using a resident's average water consumption this winter (December, January and February months) when outdoor use is minimal. This water use determines the how much wastewater enters the sewage system, as virtually all

water used at a residence during the winter goes down the drain to the treatment plant. As with electricity and water, the cost varies with use.

The existing method of linking wastewater rates to the number of bedrooms in a home will be phased out with the installation of meters. Those residents who are thrifty with their water will not only see a reduced water bill, but their wastewater charges will likely decline as well. Residents who are not mindful of their water use during the winter could be billed for higher

wastewater charges beginning in July, depending on their bedroom count.

Once the water-based wastewater charge is set, it will last for 12 months and then readjust the following July to reflect water use in the previous winter.

Residents who were part of 2011's Phase 1 water meter installation program will not have their wastewater rate changed until July 2013, following their first winter of metered water use. Residents receiving meters in 2012 will see their wastewater billing change in July 2014, and so on.

Leak detector a handy tool

Although the primary purpose of water meters are to ensure that water users are billed equitably, the meter also is a tool that could save you money.

The meter dial is similar to a speedometer gauge on a car. It shows the flow of water and the number of cubic feet passing through the meter.

Meters in Lodi also have a second indicator, either a blue wheel or a red triangle as shown in the highlighted portion in the picture to the right. This is the leak detector.

Whether or not you suspect there's a leak in your home's plumbing system, this easy-to-read leak detector that's part of every meter could save you substantial dollars.

The large red dial will move when you open a faucet, flush a toilet or fill your water heater. But the larger dial won't

move so obviously when there's a leak in a sprinkler or toilet tank valve.

Your meter is located in a concrete vault near the sidewalk. To test for leaks, turn off all water sources inside and outside your home, then look at the smaller gauge on the meter's face. If the red triangle or blue wheel are moving, your home is using water. Another way is to read the dial, wait at least 20 minutes and see if the meter reads the same. If not, verify no water was used by automatic equipment, such as a refrigerator ice machine or water dispenser.

Tracing back the source of the leak can be difficult. One of the easiest ways to check for a leaking toilet is to place dye



in the tank and wait 15 minutes. If the dye appears in the bowl within that time, there's a leak in the flapper valve.

A leaking faucet that drips every two seconds wastes 1,000 gallons of water a year.

Phase 2

(Continued from front)

meters and approximately 5 miles of water mains within various streets as shown in the map on Page 1.

Residents in the affected areas will receive advance notice of construction in their neighborhoods by the contractor.

The Water Meter web page (www.lodi.gov/meters) contains frequently asked questions specific to the construction schedule.

Water meter payment options still exist

A majority of property owners billed \$300 for the cost of their water meters paid the balance before July 1.

The remaining are being billed \$8.52 a month for 36 months until the balance is paid off.

Property owners, however, have the option of paying an additional amount to retire the debt sooner. There are two options for those interested in making additional payments:

1) Make the extra payment in person at

the Finance Division, 310 W. Elm St.

2) If you mail a check for your utility payment, include a second check and a note stating the second check should be applied toward the meter balance.

Other payment methods will result in a credit on the utility statement, and not the meter balance. To ensure proper credit, avoid making an additional payment via the City's online payment service or at any of the three merchant pay stations.